

DODD CASE AUGURS A BROAD INQUIRY

STATINTL

Panel to Study Ethics of All Senators on Financing

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, May 28 —

The Senate ethics committee is quietly expanding its investigation of Senator Thomas J. Dodd into a major examination of Congressional income and spending.

According to informed sources, the committee believes that Mr. Dodd's connection with the controversial Chicago public relations man, Julius Klein, is the least significant investigatory area. It has already decided to concentrate its investigation on the complex and, in the view of members, very real problems of the high cost of political living.

One source described committee members as believing they have an unavoidable role to play in establishing new rules and new boundaries of conduct.

These Senators are described as believing that the Dodd investigation must focus as much on the broad social, financial and political necessities of Congressional life as on the Senator himself.

The result may be important support by the committee for the major reforms in raising and spending political money that President Johnson has proposed.

Decision Made Earlier

Even before the President made his proposals on Thursday, it was learned, the ethics committee—officially the Senate Select Committee on Standards and Conduct—was committed to go beyond the specific allegations of misconduct against the Connecticut Democrat. It reportedly decided several weeks ago that its main job must be to recommend a new code of conduct for all Senators, whether the President's proposed legislation is adopted or not.

Such a code could be made a part of the Senate rules by a resolution, without the concurrence of the House.

The President's bill, which has been five months in preparation at the Justice Department, was also influenced by the Dodd controversy. An Administration official said it had been "enriched" at the last moment to take account of the charge that the Senator had converted thousands of dollars in "campaign contributions" to his personal use. This was done, the official said, because the controversy had "underlined a

Suit Is Amended

On the same day Mr. Johnson sent Congress the bill which includes a blanket requirement for detailed public disclosure not only of all campaign contributions but also of all gifts of more than \$100 and all income for services by members of Congress—Mr. Dodd amended his \$5-million libel and conspiracy complaint against Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson, authors of the column "Washington Merry-Go-Round."

The revision — intended to hasten the trial, Mr. Dodd said — dropped his original contention that the columnists had acted "falsely and maliciously" in reporting that he had "pocketed" \$50,000 to \$100,000 from three campaign fund-raising dinners and had converted that much, tax-free, to his own use.

The amended suit also reduced the libel and conspiracy damages sought from \$5-million to \$2-million, an amount based largely on the columnists' alleged "false and malicious" assertion that Mr. Dodd had improperly sought to promote the special interests of Mr. Klein, a registered agent of the West German Government.

The conspiracy count, left intact, charges the columnists with "inducing, aiding and abetting" former and present employees of Mr. Dodd's office to prepare photocopies of the Senator's private and official files and to deliver the copies to Mr. Pearson and Mr. Anderson.

Doubts Taken Into Account

Although the Dodd matter is still publicly the ethics committee's only agenda, observers regard with particular interest the committee's private decision to go deeply into other questions.

For one thing, the decision to broaden its field of investigation appears to answer, in part, doubts about the committee's determination to investigate deeply into the affairs of a colleague.

Aware of public questions about its credibility, the committee has engaged retired Supreme Court Justice Charles Evans Whittaker, a Kansas Republican, as its legal consultant, and increased its professional staff to three.

Mr. Whittaker will have the responsibility of advising and presumably being publicly credited with committee rulings that might otherwise open its members to charges of "whitewash" if the decisions seem favorable to Mr. Dodd or, on the other hand, to senatorial complaints of harshness toward a colleague.